

community. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in thanking Judge Kirkland for her work and congratulate her on the occasion of her retirement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARTIN HEINRICH

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. Speaker, I unfortunately missed a vote yesterday afternoon, specifically rollcall vote 879.

If I had been present, I would have voted in support of rollcall vote 879, the Democratic Motion to Recommit H.R. 527.

RECOGNITION OF THE ST. LOUIS BALLET IN ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

HON. W. TODD AKIN

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mr. AKIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the St. Louis Ballet located in St. Louis, Missouri.

For over ten years, Gen Horiuchi has served as the artistic director of the St. Louis Ballet. His international reputation with major choreographers throughout the world has enabled the St. Louis Ballet to bring original productions to the St. Louis region.

The St. Louis Ballet has played a vital role in community development by facilitating culture and arts in the St. Louis area. The ballet has been involved in community outreach to foster children in offering free private lessons and to Senior Assisted Living facilities in making the art of ballet and ballet performances more accessible.

Ballet truly is an artistic skill that embodies the American spirit as much as it emboldens young people to push limits and succeed in whatever they chose to do. The St. Louis Ballet School does just that as it produces many fine dancers that demonstrate high degrees of teamwork, care for others, respect, and discipline. Mr. Horiuchi's ballet is constantly transitioning and evolving, allowing for greater expression and freedom to explore and to advance. It is traits like these that Americans are hungry for in this current time in our history.

I congratulate the St. Louis Ballet's exemplary example of the leadership St. Louis and in Missouri as a whole. I am pleased to honor them in their continued endeavor to bring art and culture to the St. Louis region.

HONORING PFC. THEODORE B. RUSHING

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of Florida, I rise today to honor the life, service, and sacrifice of Pfc. Theodore B. Rushing. Pfc. Rushing was killed in action in

Afghanistan on Veterans' Day, November 11, 2011.

Growing up in Central Florida, Rushing graduated from Altamonte Christian School. After earning his associates degree from Seminole State College, Rushing chose to enlist in the U.S. Army, with plans to follow his father's footsteps and join the Orlando Police Department. Known to his friends as Teddy, Pfc. Rushing had an adventuresome spirit and loved being outdoors. He was known for being gregarious and outgoing.

After graduating boot camp in June 2011, Rushing continued his training at the Calvary Scout School at Fort Knox in Kentucky and was assigned to the 10th Mountain Division, 71st Cavalry and stationed in Ft. Drum, NY. Rushing was deployed to Afghanistan in August and served in Kandahar province. On November 11, Rushing's unit was attacked and Rushing was killed in combat.

Rushing's medals and awards include the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, and the Afghanistan Campaign Medal. Pfc. Rushing is survived by his father, Rick; his mother, Ann; and his sister, Stacy. His life, service, and sacrifice are remembered by all.

ANNOUNCING RECIPIENTS OF THE INAUGURAL CONGRESSIONAL VETERAN COMMENDATION FOR THE THIRD DISTRICT OF TEXAS—ELIZABETH MCCORMICK

HON. SAM JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to announce before my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives the names of eleven distinguished military veterans and community servants who call the Third District of Texas home. For their selfless service and dedication to their neighbors and nation, the following individuals have been selected as recipients of the inaugural Congressional Veteran Commendation:

Chief Warrant Officer Elizabeth McCormick served our country in the U.S. Army from 1994 to 2001. After Basic Training at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, McCormick decided to forego Officer Candidate School, instead heading to the Warrant Officer Flight Training Program to increase her chances of fulfilling her dream—serving as a Blackhawk helicopter pilot.

She graduated first in her class and was soon assigned to Fort Drum, New York flying Command & Control and VIP Missions. Upon promotion to Chief Warrant Officer 2, McCormick was transferred to Katterbach Army Airfield in Germany where she served as Rear Detachment C Company Commander during peacekeeping operations in Kosovo.

For her excellent service, McCormick was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, and Army Aviator Badge.

Though an injury incurred in Germany forced McCormick into medical retirement, she maintained her spirits and searched for new goals. She moved to Dallas, Texas where she

built a business as a Longaberger Consultant. McCormick is now active in the local community, participating in several Chambers of Commerce and serving as President of the Firewheel Chapter of Women of Visionary Influence. Each year she also participates in an Armed Forces Day Barbeque where she collects boxes of dry foods and goods for overseas troops.

It is my pleasure to name Elizabeth McCormick a recipient of the inaugural Congressional Veteran Commendation for the Third District of Texas.

RECOGNIZING MR. CARL WATLEY FOR HIS SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a remarkable man and steward of the Cary, Mississippi community, Mr. Carl Watley. Mr. Watley is a lifelong resident of Cary, Mississippi, where he has devoted much of his time to serving as a positive male influence for the children of Cary. For years he has devoted himself to serving not only as guardian but as a role model for his niece and nephew, who were left without a parent after the untimely death of his sister. Mr. Watley is also admired and adored by the children of Sharkey and Issaquena Counties, many of which see him as a father figure and role model as well.

Mr. Watley has served his region for several years by providing community activities to the children of the area with his own personal resources. During the summer months, Mr. Watley sponsors activities for more than 140 children. He is currently working to secure funds to build a community house that will provide recreational alternatives for the children of Cary, Mississippi. He has organized a number of events for the children of Cary, including community clean-ups, field days and bible study for the young men of the community. Mr. Watley is also working with community leaders of Cary to establish a park in the Maiden Addition community.

Mr. Watley is an active member of the Parents for Public School Leadership and is certified under the National Certification in Fatherhood Leadership. He is a member of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church where he serves as the Youth Leader, a musician and a deacon.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my colleagues join me in expressing my sincere gratitude to Mr. Carl Watley of Cary, Mississippi for being a champion of children and a pillar of the community.

THE EMPTY CHAIR

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 2, 2011

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Thanksgiving, millions of Americans will sit down to a decorated table filled with turkey and all the